COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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" FR. *'Tis all a LIBEL—Paxton, Sir, will say.*
" P. *Not yet, my Friend! to-morrow 'faith it may;*
" *And for that very cause I print to-day.*"—POPE. Epil. to Sat.

DEFENCE OF MR. PITT.

[The following letter comes, as the reader will at once perceive, from a thorough-paced partisan of Mr. Pitt. It has been drawn forth by my letter to Mr. Pitt upon the subject of the Corn-bill; but it goes occasionally into other matters, and, on many accounts, I think it right to make some comments on most parts of it. With this view the paragraphs are numbered, in order to render a reference to them more easy. The comments will be found under the head of Summary of Politics.]

SIR,——1. You are certainly liberal in admitting, and publishing the observations of those who differ with you, and I believe, that any thing of censure contained in them, would not induce you to be otherwise. I do assure you, that I have often, very often, read your papers with great satisfaction; that I have approved your sentiments on many subjects, and that I have admired the talents you have shewn in expressing them. I have thought your work very useful, in many respects, and I should be sorry to see it sinking in estimation. But, to be open with you, it has of late met with many animadversions unfavourable to it; and I always exceedingly lament the justice of them, when directed against a degree of scurrility and defamation, into which you sometimes descend, and, also, a party spirit, which leads you into unfairness.

2.—It has often been said, of late, than used to be the case, that you are not always correct in your observations, as to the truth of them, and that you oppose measures, because you do not like the men. It is within my *own knowledge*, that you were totally ignorant of every circumstance that concerned Mr. Canning and Lord Hawkesbury; and, though I am not at liberty to enter into the detail, be assured, that it would prove no less honourable to the former, than disgraceful to the latter; and, that the whole conduct of the former, throughout the arrangements that were proposed, on Mr. Pitt's return to office, was most highly creditable, and acknowledged to be so, by the principal persons concerned. You may imagine, therefore, that it is unpleasant to read censures that are unjust, and that prove your entire ignorance of the real state of the case.

3.—With regard to your unfairness in opposing measures, I am disposed to address you in consequence of your observations to Mr. Pitt, in your last Register, on the subject of the Corn Bill. Your object is an attack on *him*, and not on the *bill*; and, though I exceedingly lament that it passed, and feel that it has as yet done mischief only, yet, I must confess, that your observations are futile and unfair, and unworthy of you.

4.—The animal man is naturally, I fear, a rogue, and whatever gives him an opportunity of playing off his tricks is to the bad. The Corn Bill gave a sanction to somewhat of higher prices, and they soon became much higher, than it could intend to authorize; and, I verily believe, that Mr. Pitt's single declaration that the harvest would be deficient, went a great way towards producing a general cry of its being so, and towards raising the prices accordingly. But, assuredly the object of the Corn Bill was to equalise prices in general, and to prevent those distressing variations, which you yourself lamented in a former Register; and, if unluckily it had not passed just on the eve of an harvest, that is not, perhaps, beyond an average crop, it would have had the desired effect, and would have satisfied the farmer that he would always get enough for his corn. If the yield had been as it was last year, it would have been a beneficial measure, for certainly there was every reason to believe, in the spring, that wheat would not fetch £8 a load, and that the farmers would be ruined; and, therefore, it would have been desirable to secure them a fair price from exportation, of such superabundance, as, in that case, we should have had.

5.—Why cavil at the expressions in the report, " expect a supply," and " product " of the growth." Surely they are both perfectly intelligible. It is not that the price is to have any thing to do with the seasons, and tempt *them* to give good expectancy, as your friend would ridiculously represent. But, that by holding out a bonus, we may tempt *men* to grow the corn, and bring it to market, and export the superabundance. And, surely, the product of the growth, is simply the yield after threshing, and you could not possibly apply it fairly to any idea of money to purchase supply.

6.—The great object certainly is to give the farmer a fair profit, year after year. Casual high prices will undoubtedly induce him to continue the growth of as much corn as his lands will bear, and so would a regular fair price; and there is no question, but that the latter would be far more beneficial both to the farmer and to the people. It would be far better for him to have £15 for every load of wheat each year, than it would be for him to have only £8 for two successive years, and £29 the third. He is led, perhaps, into extraordinary expenses by the extraordinary profits, and the 4th year the price may be reduced again to the lowest ratio; every article may have increased, labour, and the value of every commodity in life; an income tax comes upon him, and he would be ruined. To prevent these mischiefs, an equalization of his profits is surely desirable for him, and we had all rather pay a moderate price every year, for bread, than have it at a very cheap rate one year, and at a very dear one another; to say nothing of the other consequences from its advance in price.

7.—A market certainly should always exist, in order to encourage the provision of corn, and after two years of plenty it is evident, from the state of things in the last spring, that the home consumption was not sufficient to make a market; for if we had had a very plentiful harvest this year, corn would hardly have been worth carrying to market at all. From ignorance of what a harvest will turn out, and which cannot be known till housed, every farmer will always grow as much wheat as his lands, in the usual course of cropping, will bear; and though other commodities have been raised from the excessive high prices that they obtained three years ago, they have not since fallen, and therefore, the quantity grown would not, if superabundant, have such desirable effect, and be a sufficient inducement to the farmer to sow the more. A regular settled price would have a much better effect, and go further towards increasing the population, upon your own argument, as it is of course the effect of two or three years easy condition, and is as much checked by a year's scarcity, and high prices, as it is encouraged by a year's abundance and cheapness. I lay it down as certain, that every farmer will grow all the wheat he can, either for the chance of casual high prices, or on expectation of bounty; but if five years of plenty were to succeed each other, he might be discouraged, and to prevent this, it is necessary to hold out the bounty, which *so far* aids the production. It is not intended to add largely to his profits, only to make them regularly sufficient, and this would stop the progress of the evil of raising rents, and refusing leases; for the landlords have certainly a fair right to the full profit of their estates, yet to raise the rents upon every casual high price, is to perpetuate the mischief of it.

8.—All your friend's reasoning about exportation, appears to me founded upon false premises. Of corn there may be a superabundance, and, then as the home market is too low, a foreign market must be found in order to support the farmer. But of all the other articles he states, we have never a superabundance, and therefore, always a fair price at home, and no need to encourage exportation; and really part of his reasoning is childish, and unworthy the subject, and from the lowness of its value might deserve a bounty to be got rid of.

9.—I do not know at what age you might draw your conclusions about the producing capacity of the land, but you must now surely see, from experience, that two plentiful years give more than sufficient for the supply, and that one scanty year, succeeding them, creates a scarcity, or, at least, exorbitant prices; so that the sustenance requisite, and the productive power do not keep pace with each other. Nor will a bounty make them do so, more or less, nor is the Corn Bill expected to have such effect, by any of the four classes, for whom you provide arguments. It is only intended to prevent prices that are extravagant, either way; to prevent the farmer from being discouraged by such successive years of cheapness, as might give him no profit, and by allowing him a better price at home, maintain a juster equilibrium between consumption and production, when somewhat less of plenty ensues.

10.—I do not think that any farmer enters into the sort of calculation you suggest, about the future price, and the disposal of his land. If it is in turn for wheat, it is sown with wheat; for it is impossible to decide that it may not answer perfectly well, as in the case of this very year, when there is an abundance on hand, and an average crop, and still an enormous price. If the yield is not good, the price will be accordingly high, and if it is good, it is surely desirable that a foreign market should afford a fair price, if our own will not. If he were to reserve the producing capacity as you imagine, he might very probably lose more by keeping it for a plentiful year, than he would by having a moderate price only, in

a regular way, and if a sufficient price were secured to him, he would be always benefitted.

11.—You argue as if the difference could be made in a few days, instead of its being the work of nearly fourteen months, to alter the state of plenty or scarcity, and draw a lamentable picture of the effect of exportation, which, as it never could take place, under the circumstances of deficiency at home, but only of superabundance, could never produce any of the consequences you deprecate.

12.—Though I lament that the bill passed, because from accidental circumstances it has been mischievous, yet, I think, it would be unwise to repeal it, until a fair trial of it has been made, on an average of crops, and of its effects, therefore, on the prices.

13.—I must pass over all your arguments, by which you would insinuate, that the measure originated in party politics, or that it had any connexion with the new income tax, as I cannot but consider such arguments wholly unfair to the person, against whom they are used, and wholly unworthy of yourself. The farmer is not benefitted by a casual high price, and you are not fair in your conclusion, that Mr. Pitt meant that a high price was favourable to the grower, because he stated that, at one time, it was too low—a medium is the best—for you can hardly seriously suppose, that the value of every article sinks so immediately on the sinking of corn, as to make a low price most advantageous to him. I fear the value of such things as you mention, will never be reasonable again, and *hence*, more than from an excessive issue of bank paper, which you always suppose *to be excessive*, is derived the distressing depreciation of money.

14.—The price of labour in this part of the country has been raised a little, since the rise of the value of corn, but by no means as much as in my opinion it ought to have been raised. The labourer ought to live by his hire. It is destructive of his independence that he should not. But the miserable system of rates is now always resorted to, to make up the deficiency between the value of his labour, and the necessary expenditure for the support of his family. In my opinion every farmer should pay his own labourers; but that is not the case; and the consequence is, that every shopkeeper, and person in moderate circumstances, is charged in the rate for their support. The farmer therefore, does not, as you imagine, suffer in proportion to the rise in the price of corn; it is fit he should, and that he should pay, in proportion to his gains, but he throws it off on others.

15.—It is the fluctuation of prices that induces landlords to with-hold leases, but they would be granted for a sufficient term of years, if the average profits of the farmer were better ascertained, and could only be raised, when they would fairly bear an advance.

16.—But the whole system is at present radically bad, for it is my firm belief that there is much iniquity with respect to prices. It is notorious, that corn factors have been ready to buy up throughout the country all the wheat they could procure; and most certainly the country markets are now regulated by the reports from London, and by the state of each other, though at great distances, in a sort of way that never used to be the case. A rider will attend three and four markets on the same day, and it is in vain to deny that speculation has thrown its baleful eyes and hands on the first articles of necessity. The price of the market is not according to a balance between consumption and production, which is sufficiently proved, in my idea, from the extraordinary variations in price, and report, though it may not make actual combination, (which may not be possible,) has yet some effect, by influencing each individual in the supply. It is in this respect that I think the Corn Bill was mischievous, coming upon a harvest that was not generally abundant. But I cannot agree to any one principle, on which you oppose it; and you appear to me to have attributed intended effects to it, which were never thought of at all, on purpose only, to argue against them, and indirectly to attempt to weaken Mr. Pitt's power, by endeavouring to effect the repeal of a measure he carried. You have hatched up mischiefs, that never could arise from it, because it would never operate, when they were possible; you have perverted and misrepresented its purposes and effects, and treated it altogether in a manner unworthy of yourself.

17.—Before I conclude this communication with you, I must beg that you would be cautious in the sentiments you express respecting the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. Your sentiments have great weight, and I am sorry to see them inclined towards the admission of sectaries especially, who are already labouring incessantly to the destruction of the Established Church. You are very little aware of their numbers throughout the country, and of their mischievous influence on the minds of the common people. Those of the most discordant

principles unite for the sake of strengthened opposition, and are always at work. The catholics, I verily believe, are harmless, and the absurdity of some of their docrines and ceremonies, makes them inefficient. But the presbyterian and independent hate our establishment in church and state, work insidiously on points that do not appear material, debase the minds of common people, and would produce, as formerly, incalculable mischief. I would write to you further on these points, but have already detained you too long, and have not myself time to add more.—I am, your faithful humble servant, P.—*Hants, Dec.* 11, 1804.

INCAPACITY OF HENRY THE SIXTH.

LETTER VI.

Sir.——The reign of this pious and well-meaning, but weak and unfortunate prince, which our general historians only mark by losses and disgrace abroad, discontent, insurrection, and civil slaughter at home, is one of the most interesting in our ancient annals for the development of the doctrines of our constitution, as it was then understood. It may surprise many to be told, that we may there discover the traces of a just theory, perhaps more scientifically expressed, though not in all respects so consistently and successfully applied, as that which we hold at this day relative to the mixed nature of our government: yet this is certainly true. In the repeated discussions which took place on the means of supplying the deficiency, when the king was himself unable to discharge the functions of the regal office, our ancestors by degrees systematized more and more. While the splendor of the monarchy was overshadowed, they could look more steadily at the objects which stood nearest to it. The question in particular which occasioned these high deliberations, was originally, and hitherto finally settled by them. Indeed it was of very frequent recurrence in different shapes, and at intervals more or less remote; for the single life of Henry the Sixth furnished examples of each sort of personal incapacity in the sovereign, natural and accidental, during infancy, and in consequence of disease. The statesmen of those times, therefore, left posterity little to desire on that score, except that the authentic monuments, which remain to us, had been in some parts fuller, more regular, and exact. Yet such as they are, all the records of all our other parliaments put together do not contain any thing worthy of notice in comparison of them. The great oracle of English law, Sir Edward Coke,* thought some explanation of the office of Protector a necessary branch of his Institutes; but, to a bare list and short commendation of the principal passages to be found in the rolls of this reign (for even he has not included all) he has only added a solitary reference to Holinshed, for historical information. Sir William Blackstone, in sending us back to him, has given a new sanction to the same authorities, and, in adopting the language of his advice,† has pointed, though perhaps unconsciously, to a peculiar and important doctrine, which they contain.

There must of course be always a greater degree of difficulty and delicacy in ascertaining when the one sort of incapacity begins to exist than the other. The fact, however, once admitted, in the principle of procedure, no distinction seems to have been made. And Sir Edward Coke clearly makes none. Though he professes to speak only of the case, where the king is of tender age, yet he directs our attention to the first protectorate of the Duke of York, as one source of instruction. On the other hand, it has been ‡ already hinted, that, when the office was conferred on that prince, the most scrupulous regard was paid to the precedents of the king's infancy. Indeed there is but one circumstance that can be supposed to make any difference between the one case of incapacity and the other; it is, that in the one there cannot be any Prince of Wales, in the other there may; in fact, there was a Prince of Wales in the only instance of that kind, which has ever actually occurred, and may God in his mercy, so often vouchsafed to this country, graciously grant, that no other such ever may occur! But, in that single instance, the prince was an infant in the cradle. Whether, if there had then been a son capable of sustaining the whole weight of the government during the absence of his father, the parliamentary leaders of that day would have determined otherwise than they did

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* 4 Inst. 58.

† That "it is the surest way to have him "(the Protector) made by *the great council* "in parliament." The "great council" is, properly speaking, *the peerage*, and this we shall see to have been in the time of Henry the Sixth, a distinct claim of the lords, acknowledged, regarded in practice. Perhaps it was sounder, and founded on a more solid theory, than may, at first sight, be imagined. But that will be for consideration hereafter.

‡ See Letter III. p. 580, of this Volume.

(except as to the share of power which they might have confided to him) may be a question, on which it is possible that some men may reason one way, and some another, from the same declarations and actions. It is not my design to enter upon it here. What I have said was merely by way of caution, that you, Sir, and your readers, might not expect what they assuredly will not find. All that I have undertaken is, to lay faithfully before you and them what was really done. And this I shall attempt in the natural order, deducing my subject from its origin. Of course I shall intersperse such other more general historical matter as may seem necessary or expedient for the purposes of elucidation and connexion.

The situation in which parliament stood at the accession of Henry the Sixth, was favourable to the establishment of any claim, which the two houses might think it just to advance. Under the two preceding kings, of the line of Lancaster, the power of that assembly had been gradually consolidated and augmented. Henry the Fourth came as the avenger and restorer of parliament, slighted, debased, over-awed, and even surrounded with armed men, by the violent and ill-advised Richard. The defect of his title supplied only by the legislative settlement of the crown on him and his issue, and the many rebellions which were continually starting up against him, compelled him, even if his inclination had leaned the other way, to uphold and strengthen that authority which was the surest support of his own. His son, the victorious Henry the Fifth, pursued the same policy from different motives. Like his illustrious progenitor, Edward the Third, while running the career of military glory and foreign conquest, he was necessarily dependent on those, from whose liberal grants alone he could derive the means of success. The last time that he met them, he submitted to them one of the most undoubted prerogatives of the crown. He presented the Treaty of Troyes for their confirmation, by one article of which he engaged never to make peace with the Dauphin, without the consent of the three estates of the realm. In the mean-time the condition of the commons, individually and collectively, was improved and raised. Slavery among the peasantry began to wear away. Laws from time to time were found, or were supposed, to be necessary for regulating the increasing class of labourers in husbandry. The small freeholders grew proportionably more numerous, and * the county-elections became in general what may be fairly called popular. When party ran high at home, the power and influence of the great lords, mutually opposing and opposed, afforded to the inferior gentry and the mass of the electors the opportunity of making either scale preponderate according to their own honest preference. When the great lords and knights were absent in foreign wars, the former could be little consulted in a canvass, and the place of the latter, as candidates, was usurped by esquires and persons of still lower rank, till restraining statutes were passed, which required certain qualifications of property both in the electors and the elected. As a seat in the House of Commons came to be an object of ambition, returns were irregularly and corruptly obtained, and hence new penalties were enacted to keep sheriffs to the impartial discharge of their duty. The duration of parliaments was insensibly lengthened, and the * prerogative of continuing the same assembly by prorogations was more frequently exercised. The effect of this was more especially felt in the House of Commons: it rendered them more expert in the science of legislation, so as to enable them to prepare their petitions more nearly in the form of acts; and it cherished in them a sort of corporate spirit, which united them among themselves into a firmer and more powerful body.

From the time that Henry the Fifth first

* The real state of the country in this respect (though at a period a little later) is shewn in a more lively manner by the facts stated in my IVth Letter, p. 804 of this Volume, and the Letter of your Correspondent, a Norfolk Freekolder, (for which I return him my thanks) than in any account of general historians. Upon one of the letters quoted by your correspondent (No. 60, in Vol. III.) Sir John Fenn truly remarks—"This is a true picture of modern electioneering, and such a letter might be written "from any county or town in the kingdom "during the time that a choice for members "was depending:" and yet, this is clearly the same election, on occasion of which the same editor had before rather hastily asserted the dependence of the House of Commons on the great Lords in those days. The restraining Statutes, whether right or wrong in policy, all go to prove the actual existence of a popular spirit still more early. Such remedies presume the supposed evil to be of adult growth.

* The parliament in 1407 under Henry the IVth held three sessions, and sate 159 days, between March and December. This was the longest parliament which had ever been known.

embarked on his expedition against France, the government of this country was * principally conducted by his two brothers, under the title and with the plenary powers of Guardians of the Realm. This was an ancient and well-known office during the absence of the King, and conveyed a perfect delegation of the royal authority to the extent of enabling the Guardian to summon and meet a parliament in his own name. Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, is said to have governed England in that character, when the King was seized with the fatal disorder which hurried him to an untimely grave. Henry on his death-bed gave the regency of France to the Duke of Bedford, a prince, who to great courage and consummate skill in war added civil prudence and conciliatory manners; the delight of the army, the favourite of the people, the admiration no less than terror of his enemies. To the regency of England he named his youngest brother, the Duke of Gloucester, who had acquitted himself of a similar trust more than once, with care, integrity, and ability, to the general satisfaction.

The Bishop of London had attended his Royal Master abroad, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Normandy. His charge expiring with the King, he delivered up the great seal to the Regent at Rouen, † by advice of the Duke of Exeter, the Earl of March, the Earl of Warwick, and other of the English lords who were present; and also, from necessity, as he afterwards declared, that the course of justice might not suffer any interruption. From the state, perhaps, of the Duchy and France, the validity of this proceeding seems never to have been questioned, and the Duke of Bedford quietly assumed and exercised the Regency.

It was not so at home. As soon as the King's death was ascertained here, Langley, Bishop of Durham, then Chancellor, repaired to Windsor, with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Winchester, and others both of the spiritual and temporal lords, and there in the presence of the Duke of Gloucester gave up the Great Seal to the infant King.* Humphrey then took and consigned it to the custody of Simon Gaustede, the Master of the Rolls; whether purposely passing by the late Chancellor as thinking him adverse to his interests, or in consequence of that prelate declining any share in a transaction, which might appear to sanction the Duke's claim to the regency, is uncertain.† Two days after, the same peers with such others as could most readily be collected, met at Westminster, in the Star-Chamber, and there held an irregular sort of great council. Their first care was to continue without intermission the administration of justice. They directed, therefore, new commissions to be made out to the judges, the sheriffs, escheators, and other similar officers of the crown. They next took into their consideration the difficulty which existed, and for a long time must exist, with regard to the exercise of the royal functions; and came to a resolution that the question ought to be referred entire to the common assembly of all the estates of the realm, to provide by their united wisdom, the best mode of government for the person and estate of the King, as well as for the kingdom, in the exigency of their present situation: with which intent they authorised the issuing of the usual writs to summon a Parliament without delay. We are not informed whether the Duke of Gloucester on this occasion brought forward his pretensions; it is probable, however, that he would not pass this opportunity of asserting them, though he might cheerfully concur in the final determination of the council. He had formerly presided on behalf of his late brother during a whole Parliament; he foresaw that no one but himself could be appointed to act for his infant nephew in the ensuing session; and, however tenacious of what he believed to

* The King himself, in the last eight years of his reign, held only three parliaments; the Duke of Bedford, as guardian, four; and the Duke of Gloucester, in the same character, one.

† This was his own account to Parliament. See Rolls, Vol. IV. 1 H. VI No. 14. The bishop had also in his custody a duplicate of the great seal of England, which he afterwards gave up at Windsor.

* Rymer, Vol. X. p. 253.

† The entry on the Rolls, Vol. IV. 1 H. VI. No. 12, whence I have taken what immediately follows, has no mention of the day or place of meeting. But the record just quoted from Rymer, after saying, that Simon Gaustede having received the seal on the 28th, carried it to London, goes on to relate, that on the morrow of the feast of St. Michael (Sep. 30) he sealed various patents in the Star-Chamber at Westminster, in the presence of the Bishop of Durham and other peers. As this record seems to have been made for his discharge, he would hardly have omitted the council, if it sate on the intermediate day.

be his own rights, he was never disposed to treat with disrespect the liberties of the people by whom he was beloved. In fact, therefore, he had anticipated the measure which was advised;* the writs, which were now sealed, had been prepared and dated on the preceding day at Windsor. From that time, the new Lord Keeper, though by virtue of the appointment which has been related, he was in possession of the office, and was allowed the established salary for it, was not called upon to put the seal to any instrument of great public importance, till the meeting of Parliament approached, when it was indispensable, according to the just notions of that day, that the King, or some representative of the King in his name, should be present to open the session. Accordingly, three days before the meeting, a commission was addressed to the Duke of Gloucester, giving him full power so to appear there, to proceed therein, to do there whatever the King himself ought to do for the good government of the realm, and all the dominions thereunto belonging, and finally, with the assent of the council, to close and dissolve the assembly: in short, it vested in him for one whole session the entire legislative authority of the crown. He presided;† his commission was read; and at his command the Archbishop of Canterbury explained the causes of the summons, which he said were to provide, during the tender age of the King, for the good governance of the royal person, the conservation of internal peace and the due execution of the laws, the security and defence of the kingdom; but avoiding every allusion to a regent, he fixed the attention of the two houses wholly on the choice of a proper council. "It "principally imported them," he said, "to "provide for the first of the purposes which "he had mentioned, some honourable and "discreet persons, in which, they all ought "to give their best advice; agreeably to "the counsel of Jethro to Moses, they "should take such as feared God, wise "men and religious, hating covetousness, "of influence and authority in the state."

In conclusion, he desired the Commons to go and elect their speaker. He was presented to the duke and approved by him.

The proceedings which immediately followed relative to Humphrey's claims to the regency of the kingdom, would much exceed the space which you can allot me in your present number. I think it better, therefore, to stop here, than to break off in the middle of them. My next letter will contain the whole of the discussions on the subject of the Protector's power during the King's infancy.—I am, Sir, &c. T. M.

Middle Temple, Dec. 17, 1804.

WAR OF WORDS.

Sir,—From the style and temper in which some late occurrences have been announced and commented upon, in some of our daily prints, it should seem that we are engaged in a war of words, rather than in a conflict of arms, with our antient and inveterate foe: a method of hostility less deadly no doubt, but not greatly redounding to the national honor and credit; it being easy enough to collect and employ injurious epithets and phrases, in the use of which, we may become as skilful and acrimonious as our neighbours, though we cannot, by such futile weapons, expect to humble their pride or reduce their power. The seizure of Sir George Rumbold's person and papers has been inveighed against as a deed of the deepest malignity and perfidy! a violation of the law of nations most heinous! unheard of! and without precedent! and every odious appellation has, in consequence, been poured upon Buonaparté, its abominable and atrocious author and contriver. The act itself, in truth, is not to be vindicated: it is one in the long list of treacherous and disgusting proceedings, to which the blind acrimony of nations, whether civilized or uncivilized, when at war, too often gives birth; but it is not marked with peculiar novelty or atrocity. The jealous intrigues and subtle enterprizes of one state, occasion similar proceedings to be adopted by another: and you have as little reason to look for an uniform reverence of the person of an ambassador, or an undeviating respect for a neutral territory, as you have to imagine your enemy's artillery should not be pointed against your fortresses lest perchance it should sweep away some of their peaceable inhabitants. If, instead of giving way to these violent ebullitions of wrath and indignation, we were to consult history, we should find that similar transactions have passed again and again, and have found their apology in the policy of the times; in

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* If the second meeting in Rymer, and that mentioned in the Rolls be the same, as in the preceding note I have supposed them to be, and as I think clear; then what I have assumed above is the most obvious and only admissable way of accounting for the fact that the writs are dated on the 29th from Windsor.

† It is to be found both in Rymer and the Rolls. What follows is from the Rolls.

our own country indeed, and under the House of Brunswick, an example offers itself of as bold and irregular an exertion of power as that of which, in this our day, we so loudly and grievously complain. The History * states, that in the year 1715, Charles XII. had formed a project to invade England, and was deep engaged in negotiation with the English malcontents. George the First having received from different quarters various information of this conspiracy, on his return from the Continent caused Count Gyllenberg the Swedish ambassador to be arrested in London: and by his requisition, Baron Goertz, the Swedish resident in Holland, was likewise arrested by order of the States General; their papers were seized and searched, and amongst them were found ample proofs of the suspected machinations. The foreign ministers expressed much astonishment and regret at the proceedings; but Mr. Methuen, the Secretary of State, pleaded the *urgent necessity* which had compelled the King to this measure; and it does not appear that either the king or his minister were on account of it either libelled or stigmatized throughout the rest of Europe. Abusive language is not the weapon by which such unwarrantable an exercise of power is to be restrained. In public as in private affairs, *fortiter in re, suaviter in modo*, is the better maxim: for whether it be the object to coerce or conciliate the enemy, hard blows may possibly effect the one, whereas hard words may prove a serious obstacle to the other.—A. T.—*Dec.* 12, 1804.

CORONATION OF NAPOLEON.

Paris, Dec. 1, 1804.—The Senate, in pursuance of a resolution passed in its sitting of the 26th of Nov., presented itself in a body at eleven o'clock this morning at the Palace of the Thuilleries. Having been introduced into the Chamber of State, they were presented to his Imperial Majesty by his Imperial Highness Prince Joseph, Grand Elector. His Excellency M. Francois (de Neufchateau), the President, addressed his Majesty in the following terms:—

"Sire,—The first attribute of the sovereign power of a people is the right of suffrage specially applied to fundamental laws. It is this that constitutes real citizens. Never has this right been more free, more independent, more certain, nor more legally exercised by any people, than it has been amongst us since the happy 9th of Nov. (18 Brumaire). One plebiscitum placed the reins of government in your hands for ten years; a second entrusted them to you for life. The French people has now again, for the third time, expressed its will. Three millions five hundred thousand men, dispersed over the surface of an immense territory, have simultaneously voted the Empire hereditary in your Majesty's august family. Their acts of suffrage are contained in 60,000 registers, which have been verified and scrupulously examined. There is not a shadow of doubt either respecting the state, or the number of those who have put forth their voice, neither as to the right of each to give his vote, nor as to the result of this universal suffrage. Thus, then, the senate and people of France unanimously agree that the blood of Buonaparté shall henceforth be the Imperial blood of France; and that the new throne raised for Napoleon, and rendered illustrious by him, shall never cease to be possessed either by the descendants of your Majesty, or by those of the princes, your brothers.—This last testimony of the confidence of the people, and of their just gratitude, ought to be flattering to your Imperial Majesty's heart. It is glorious for a man, who has devoted himself, as you have done, to the welfare of his peers, to learn that his name alone is sufficient to unite such a vast number of men. In this instance, Sire, the voice of the people is the voice of God. No government can be founded on a more indisputable title. The senate, the depository of this title, has passed a resolution to present itself in a body before your Imperial Majesty. It comes to display the joy with which it is penetrated, to offer you the unfeigned tribute of its felicitations, of its respect, of its love, and to applaud itself for the object of this proceeding, in as much as that consummates what it expected from your foresight, to tranquillise the uneasiness of all good Frenchmen, and to conduct into port the bark of the republic.——Yes, Sire, of the republic! This word might wound the ears of an ordinary monarch. Here the word is in its proper place before him, whose genius has enabled us to enjoy the thing in the sense in which it can exist amongst a great people; you have done more than extending the limits of the republic, for you have established it on a solid base. Thanks to the Emperor of the French, the conservative principles of the interests of all, have been introduced into the government of one, and the strength of a monarchy founded in a republic. For forty centuries past, the question, which form of government is best, has been agitated; for forty centuries past the monarchical form of government has been consi-

* Belsham's Memoirs of G. I. v. 1. p. 132.

dered as the *chef d'œuvre* of political wisdom, and the sole secure harbour of the human race. But there was one thing wanted, to unite without risque, the elements of liberty to its unity of power, and the certainty of its succession.—This improvement in the act of governing, is an advance which Napoleon at this moment produces in the social science. He has laid the foundation of representative states; he has not confined his views to their present existence; he has implanted in them the seeds of their future perfection. Whatever is wanted to their completion at first, will grow out of their own progress. It is the honour of the present age; the hope and the model of future ages.——Sire, the first rank amongst the greatest men that have done honour to the earth, is reserved for the founders of Empires. Those, who have ruined them, have enjoyed but a fatal glory; those who have suffered them to fall to ruin, are every where objects of reproach. Honour to those who raise them! They are not only the creators of nations, but they secure their continuance by laws which become the inheritance of futurity. We owe this treasure to your Imperial Majesty; and France proportions the measure of those thanks, which the Conservative Senate now presents to you in its name, to the magnitude of this blessing.—If a pure republic had been possible in France, we cannot doubt that you would have wished to have the honour of establishing it; and if it were possible, we should never be exonerated from the guilt of not having proposed it to a man having power sufficient to realise the idea of it; personally great enough not to need a sceptre, and generous enough to sacrifice his own interests to the interests of his country. Though, like Lycurgus, you should have to banish yourself from that country, which you would have organised, you would not have hesitated. Your profound meditations have been more than once directed to this great problem; but this problem was not to be solved even by your genius.——Superficial minds, struck with the ascendancy which so much success and glory so happily acquired for you over the spirit of the nation, have fancied, that you had it in your power to give it at discretion a popular government or a monarchical regime. There was no medium: not a soul wished for aristocracy in France: but the legislature ought to take men such as they are, and to give them, not the most perfect laws that could be devised, but like Solon, the best they can bear. Though the chisel of a great artist forms at pleasure out of a block of marble either a tripod or a god, the body of a nation cannot be modelled on the same principle. It is true, Sire, that your life is a tissue of prodigies: but though you might have bent the nature of things and the character of men to such a pitch, as to cast the masses of France once into the mould of democracy, this wonder would have been but a transient illusion: should we have concurred in it, we should only have forged chains for posterity.——When our representatives, placed on the ruins of the throne, believed they could establish a republic, their intentions were pure: before sad experience released them from the enchantment, they sincerely worshipped that delusive phantom which they took for equality. We can speak of an error by which we had been dazzled for a moment.—Alas! who could avoid it? The popular torrent hurried along the most indifferent in spite of themselves.——It is said, that the ancient Persians in order to convince the people of the terrible danger of an abuse of liberty, used to employ a very extraordinary custom: they used to inoculate themselves for a short time with the plague of political bodies. When any of their kings died, five days were spent in anarchy without authority or laws. Licentiousness was neither restrained then nor punished afterwards; they were five days given up to the spirit of vengeance, to excess, to violence, in a word, they were five days of revolution. This proof, it is said, used to make the people return with much joy to submission to their prince.——After fluctuations more terrible than those of a troubled sea, it was thought that an infallible remedy had been discovered for popular convulsions in a polygarchy. The depositing of authority in the hands of many, was better than the absence or the dispersion of this authority: but differing spirits, and opposite wills could not be included in the same body, as the Manicheans used to place two contrary principles at the head of the universe. The struggle between these two principles would have annihilated France, if the course that has been taken had not been adopted, to return to a more concentrated power.

[*To be continued.*]

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

Agreeably to the intimation at the head of the present sheet, I here propose to offer some remarks on the letter of my Correspondent P, taking the several points according to the order wherein I find them, with this exception only, that his second paragraph will be taken first, because the first and third paragraphs naturally come under one head.

Mr. Canning and Lord Hawkesbury.——My Correspondent charges me

with unfairness of argument, party and personal motives, with misrepresentation and perversity; but, as relating to Mr. Canning and his colleague, Lord Hawkesbury, he scruples not to accuse me, at once, of falsehood; and, though he has the goodness to leave a loop-hole for me by the way of "total ignorance;" yet, the statement must, according to him, still be false; so that, at best, the Register, through my ignorance, is become the propagator of falsehood. He says, (paragraph 2), that it is within his *own knowledge*, that I was totally ignorant of every circumstance that concerned Mr. Canning and Lord Hawkesbury; that he is not at liberty to enter into the detail, but that I may be *assured*, that it would prove no less honourable to the former than disgraceful to the latter; and that, therefore, it is unpleasant to hear censures that are unjust, and that *prove* my entire ignorance of the real state of the case.——I would first beg leave to ask this gentleman, whether, if it be unpleasant to hear unjust censure of others, it can be very pleasant to hear unjust censure of oneself? And, if it cannot be, I think, it will not be denied, that we should be very cautious how we express our censure to the person against whom it is directed, even though we do it anonymously. Whether my Correspondent has acted upon this principle, or whether he has entirely disregarded it, will presently appear.——I have, this writer seems to think, censured Mr. Canning for his conduct in the affair alluded to. What he may consider as censure, I do not know; but my statement respecting Mr. Canning will shew, I think, that, according to the usual acceptation of the word, my *censure* of that gentleman was not, at most, very strong. I stated, in page 783, that "it was said, that Mr. Canning, before he "would consent to take office in the pre-"sent ministry, insisted that Lord Hawkes-"bury should be removed from the office of "foreign affairs;" and, I further stated, that this report was, in a great degree, confirmed by what Mr. Canning himself said in the House of Commons, where, on the 18th of June last, thinking it necessary to state the grounds upon which he thought himself justified in joining the new ministry, he said, "I shall content myself with "vindicating my own consistency. I *ob-"jected* to the administration of foreign af-"fairs, and *that has been changed.*" Now, I ask any candid man, whether this can, with any propriety, be called *censure* of Mr. Canning. In page 824, the subject was revived, in consequence of the letter of a correspondent, who positively assured me, that Lord Hawkesbury's conduct had been truly dignified, and that it was Mr. Canning who had acted the submissive part, upon the occasion alluded to. I just observed, that barely asserting this, either to me or to the public, appeared by no means satisfactory. And I said, as upon the former occasion, that the only facts which the world knew were these: that Lord Hawkesbury had been removed from the office of foreign affairs; and that Mr. Canning had publicly said, that he had objected to the administration of that office under Lord Hawkesbury. Was here any censure of Mr. Canning? Upon the report, that Mr. Canning had made Lord Hawkesbury's removal one of the terms of his condescending to join the ministry, I did, indeed, observe, that, in any other times than the present, such a person as Mr. Canning having obtained a similar influence would have been matter of great astonishment; and this observation I now wish to be understood as repeating. But, all this is no *censure* of Mr. Canning. Censure of Mr. Pitt, indeed, might hence be inferred; and as my Correspondent does not allow me to make any statement wherefrom such an inference can possibly be drawn, I may, on this account, have, according to his notions, incurred just blame; but, certainly not on account of censure of Mr. Canning.——I am, however, not quite satisfied with having shown, that I passed no censure upon this gentleman. It is not pleasant to hear oneself reproached with "total ignorance" of any sort, and particularly upon a subject whereon one has taken the liberty to speak to the public. This Correspondent bids me be "assured," that I am totally ignorant upon this subject, and that, though he is not at liberty to enter into any detail, I may venture to state, that the transaction was "not less honourable to Mr. Canning than "*disgraceful* to Lord Hawkesbury." That the gentleman expected his letter to be published, or that he wished it to be, there can be no doubt; and, it will be for the reader to say, whether his treatment of Lord Hawkesbury exhibits any very striking proof of that fairness, which he is so anxious to inculcate with respect to every discussion wherein Mr. Pitt is concerned. But before I proceed to attempt to show, that all the ignorance of this matter does not lie on my side, and that I should not be justified in venturing to make any such statement as that, with which he has furnished me, let me ask, what pretensions he has to such implicit confidence? and whether, from experience, I have not good reason to doubt, I will not say of his vera-

city, but certainly of his memory, or of his judgment? In p. 814 I inserted a former letter of his, in which, by way of answer to a previous statement of mine, that labourer's wages did *not* rise with the price of corn, he said. "Sir, you are *certainly mis-informed* with respect to the prices of "labour. As provisions become dearer, "they will rise without any difficulty. "They are *always* kept in proportion to "the value of the bushel of corn; and, "the farmers on the one hand, and the "men themselves on the other, take care "to raise them and lower them continually." Yet, after having, no longer ago than the month of August last, spoken to me in this confident and dogmatical manner, he, in his present letter acknowledges, (14th paragraph) that, though "labour has been "raised a little, it has been rsised by "*no means so much as it ought to be.*" This were a trifle, if he did not, at the time he is thus convicting himself of a palpable error, to give it the mildest term, again call upon me, in a manner equally positive and dogmatical, to prefer his information to my own. But, let us now come at once to the real state of that case, of all the circumstances of which he chooses to regard me, and, perhaps, really thinks me, "totally ignorant;" let me, since he is not at liberty to do it, enter into the detail of the transaction. I do not speak from positive knowledge of the facts; it is evident, indeed, that it is next to impossible that I should have been an eye or ear witness of any thing that has passed between Lord Hawkesbury, Mr. Canning, and Mr. Pitt; but, I *have been told* what has passed, what I have been told I seriously declare that I fully believe, and it is as follows: Mr. Canning having, on the 18th of June last, made use of the words above quoted from the Parliamentary Debates (Vol. II. p. 722), Lord Hawkesbury wrote to Mr. Pitt, signifying his displeasure at the conduct of Mr. Canning, and intimating the impossibility of his remaining in office under such a representation as was contained in the public declaration of the latter. Mr. Pitt, in answer, gave to the speech of Mr. Canning a favourable interpretation, and disclaimed any part, either directly or indirectly, in any thing tending to give to the removal of Lord Hawkesbury the appearance of degradation. I will not say positively that a second letter did not pass between them; but, be that as it may, Mr. Pitt came to this decision; that if Lord Hawkesbury still looked upon the offence to be of so serious a nature as to prevent him from continuing in place with Mr. Canning, the latter should give way, or, in other words, be turned out. Mr. Canning, at the same time, went to Lord Hawkesbury in person, and gave such explanations as were calculated to heal the breach. Finally, Lord Hawkesbury did not insist that Mr. Canning should go out; but, by way of amends to Lord Hawkesbury, it was agreed, that Mr. Pitt should take an opportunity of so speaking, in his place in parliament, as effectually to remove the impression, which Mr. Canning's words were, in the apprehension of his lordship, likely to have given. ——Now, whether the transaction, as thus described, be "*honourable* to Mr. Canning "and *disgraceful* to Lord Hawkesbury," I leave the reader to judge; but, I think, that no reasonable man will pretend, that any thing heretofore said by me about the matter tended to give it a turn *disadvantageous* to Mr. Canning; and I also think, that my correspondent P will not further persist in asserting, that I am so "totally "ignorant of every circumstance of the "case."——Here I should have dismissed this part of my subject; but my Correspondent has, in going back to the forming of the ministry, thrown out a challenge on the side of Mr. Canning. He says, that Mr. Canning's conduct was most honourable and disinterested from the beginning to the end; and, for proof he refers me to the principal parties concerned. Amongst the many things for which I have to praise God, one is, that I am not so connected or acquainted as to be able to avail myself of this mode of verification. But, I am, as other men are, able to form some sort of judgment from well known facts, of which, moreover, I have been not an inattentive observer. I did, then, observe, that Mr. Canning was very active in the efforts that were made to turn out the late ministry; that he unequivocally condemned the *men* as well as the measures; that he was one of those who, to all appearance, encouraged the idea of a coalition with Mr. Fox, and I believe he did it, by express words as well as by very significant actions; yet, after all this, we did see Mr. Canning taking a place under a ministry not only very different from the one which he had evidently appeared to wish for, but a ministry of which the very persons whom he had represented as totally unfit to manage the affairs of the country, still made a majority. In justification of this part of his conduct, I have heard pleaded his great obligations and his unalterable attachment to Mr. Pitt; and, with those who think, that self-interest and gratification

ought, by public men, to be preferred to the interests of the country, such a justification will, doubtless, be satisfactory; with me, however, it is by no means satisfactory, especially when I cannot but reflect, that the means of creating the obligations came from the country, and not from the private resources of the person by whom they were conferred.——There are certain other circumstances, too, respecting Mr. Canning, which this friend of his may, perhaps, now think it worth while to enter into some detail in order to clear up. In the month of February last, a pamphlet was published, under the title of "A PLAIN REPLY, &c." Its object was to reply to the pamphlet entitled "A PLAIN ANSWER," the author of which was Mr. Long. The Plain Reply has been attributed to Mr. Bragge; and from several circumstances attending it, it is probable that it was written by that gentleman. At any rate, it bears strong internal marks of having come from under the pen, or the dictation, of some one in the confidence at least of the then ministers. Towards the close of this pamphlet we find two very curious passages relative to Mr. Canning. The first relates to that gentleman's disinterestedness, and is as follows. "Come we now to their" (Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville's) "dependents. Mr. "Huskisson is up to the ears in places and "emoluments. Mr. Long has a pension. "Mr. Rose enjoys in possession, with re"version to his son, a place more lucra"tive than the Clerkship of the Pells. "Lastly, Mr. Canning *has his place too*; "one which, though nominally held during "pleasure, has not been taken from him. "But this is not all. His numerous rela"tives are all provided for; and *two sis"ters of his are actually receiving each £500 "a year from his Majesty's Exchequer*, at a "time when half that sum cannot be pro"cured for ladies of rank and high family "connexions." Every just man, every man who reflects on the amount of our taxes, on the more than a million of parish poor, and on the five millions a year collected in poor rates; every such man will ask how the then ministry could justify these grants to Mr. Canning's family; nor would it be impertinent to inquire into the motive from which Mr. Addington was induced thus to favour that gentleman, to keep him in a place when it was pretty evident, that he was performing the duties of no place. But, such inquiry does not set aside our right to ask, how Mr. Canning came to keep that place; how he came to hold any thing at the pleasure of Mr. Addington, and more especially how he came to suffer his sisters to depend, in any degree, upon the bounty of that gentleman, and to expose them, to the effects of a publication such as that from which the fact has been quoted. This pamphlet was published about ten months ago. Upon this part of it I have never heard a word by way of contradiction. I have heard it censured for a want of *liberality*; censure, in my opinion, quite unmerited; for, if the fact be true, it cannot be rendered too notorious; and, if it be false, I hereby offer my pages as a vehicle for the contradiction.——The other passage, above alluded to, closes the pamphlet, and it is well worthy of attention. Mr. Robert Ward, in his pamphlet, published under the signature of "A Mem"ber of Parliament," had said, that Mr. Canning was known, from the moment Mr. Pitt and his colleagues resigned, to have disapproved the choice of their successors; that he protested against it at the time, and had continued his protest ever since. Upon which the Plain Reply asks the following marked and significant question. "Will "this same Member of Parliament affirm, "that Mr. Canning has, *at no time*, re"tracted his *protest*, or *repented* of his op"position; that he has never shown a dis"position *to take office under Mr. Adding"ton?*" This question has never been answered either by Mr. Robert Ward or by any body else; and, I have heard, and I sincerely believe, that Mr. Addington would not find it difficult to *prove*, that, by some means or other, he had nearly subdued the disapprobation of Mr. Canning; and that, at one particular time, he had, by some measure of wisdom without doubt, so far reconciled his administration to Mr. Canning, that that gentleman did actually condescend to signify his willingness to take a place in it.——Here I close this part of the subject, hoping that my correspondent P. will speedily avail himself of the opportunity that I offer him of presenting the public with the explanations that he may think necessary, relative to the new matter, which his letter has induced me to bring forward.

LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.——In the 1st and 3d paragraphs of his letter my correspondent P. expresses his disapprobation of the manner, in which, "of late" (since Mr. Pitt became minister, I suppose) the Register has been conducted. He did esteem it, and found much in it to admire (I dare say that was when Mr. Addington was in office), and would be sorry to see it sinking in estimation; but, he has, "of *late*," heard

many animadversions on it, and has been compelled to acknowledge their justice, when directed against a degree of "scur- "rility and defamation," to which, he says I sometimes descend.——If I were to call upon this gentleman, this partisan of Mr. Pitt and his "young friends," to put his finger upon a scurrilous passage in this sixth volume of the Register, for instance, I think he would be very much puzzled to find it out; and, as to Mr. Pitt, round whose person he wishes to draw a robe of sanctity, I defy him to find, from my pen, one single phrase, which, by any possible contortion, can be styled scurrilous. "De- "famation!" Why to defame is to libel; and to libel is to commit a crime! This gentleman pretends to think me wanting in point of fairness and liberality; but his evident expectation that I should publish his letter, fully proves that he, at bottom, entertains an exactly opposite opinion of me. ——As he has not thought proper to point out any part of the Register other than that upon which he was immediately commenting, we must gather his principles upon the subject of the liberty of the press from what he has here pointed out as objectionable.—He complains, that my "object is an attack on "*Mr. Pitt*, and not on the *corn-bill*." And, I must first of all beg the reader to remember, that it is a friend and admirer of Mr. Canning who complains of this; of that Mr. Canning, who cried, "away with the "measures and give us the men!" Oh! his friend will say, but the men, at that time, were different from the present men. In short, Mr. Pitt was not then minister.—But, must not a person, who had read the whole of my letter to Mr. Pitt upon the corn-bill, have obtained a pretty complete mastery over truth, or over his senses, before he could bring himself to assert, that the object of my attack was "*not* the corn- "bill?" He says, that my observations are futile and unfair, and that he cannot agree to any one principle, upon which I have argued against the bill. This may be; but I have argued against the bill; the arguments are against the bill, and *not* against Mr. Pitt, whose motives for supporting the bill are not at all discussed; but, on the contrary, who is, in some degree, defended against the charge of party motives contained in the suggestion of the Edinburgh Reviewers. This partisan of Mr. Pitt "feels "that the bill has done mischief; he ex- "ceedingly laments that it passed;" and yet he will not believe that it could be the real object of my attack. I must, he thinks, and indeed he says it, be actuated by a party spirit ——Without asking him what spirit he is actuated by, I should like to hear what are his notions about parties. Does he think, that there ought to be no parties? When Mr. Pitt is seated at the Treasury, perhaps, he does; but, it is evident, that he thought parties very useful in turning out Mr. Pitt's predecessor. If he allows, that parties ought to exist, they must consist of men, and those men must, in some degree, be actuated by a party spirit. This spirit ought certainly to be regulated by some public principle. The good of the country ought never to be lost sight of; but, neither ought the predominance of the party ever to be lost sight of; because, by that predominance the good of the country is proposed to be promoted by every true party-man. He who makes his own influence in the party, or in the country, his main object, is no party man; he is a selfish man, and will always be found ready to leave, or to join, any side or any set, if his own private views can thereby be served. A writer on public measures has, therefore, two duties to perform, the one is to represent the measure in its true light; the other, to make his representation conducive to his general purpose of supporting the party whose predominance he regards as useful to the country, and sometimes, as in the present case, necessary to its safety and its independence. To rail, therefore, against party-motives, discovers a want of consideration. If there are parties, men must, in a certain degree, act from party motives in the discussion of every public measure; and, there is no way of preventing this but by putting an end to all parties, which, Mr. Pitt being again in place, I dare say my Correspondent would be very glad to do. —— But, his doctrine, when we consider it as coming under the head of *libels* is of a monstrous nature indeed. You attack the Corn Bill in appearance, says he, but your real object of attack is Mr. Pitt: you attack the Corn Bill directly, but Mr. Pitt indirectly: you wish to cause the bill to be repealed, but this is for the purpose of annoying Mr. Pitt: you are endeavouring to "*weaken Mr. Pitt's* "*power* by effecting the repeal of a mea- "sure he carried!" From the conclusion that this directly points to there is but one step to downright literal gagging; and, according to my motto, if notions like these were to prevail, this must be nearly the last day on which any man would dare to move his pen or to open his lips, upon the subject of public men or public measures. Mark well his notion about "*weakening the* "*power* of the minister" by causing the re-

peal of a law which he carried! Laws, be they what they will, must, then, exist: you must not call for their repeal: you must not even endeavour to show the wisdom or the necessity of repealing them, lest you should thereby weaken the power of the minister; and the minister is, of course, justified in resisting such endeavours, and in persevering in every law, however calamitous its consequences! Perhaps this gentleman would be disposed to allow members of parliament, being in their places, to speak against the Corn Bill. He makes no such exception, indeed, nor does his principle admit of it; for, every endeavour, wherever and however made, to cause a law to be repealed, is, according to him, an endeavour to weaken the power of the minister, by whom the law has been carried. Still, supposing, however, that he meant to make this exception, he destroys the press, as far as relates to the measures of ministers of state, and away goes that famous palladium of British freedom.—"Attack the measure, and not the man." This is the old cant. But, how are you to separate the measure from the man? How are you to discuss the former, I do not say freely, but at all, without discussing the conduct of the latter, and without affecting (if your discussion has any effect) his character as a statesman, and his interest of course? By endeavouring to show that the measure is weak or wicked, you are almost of necessity, endeavouring to show the weakness or wickedness of its contriver and supporter; and, according to this new-fangled doctrine, your crime is in a direct proportion to the success of your efforts, and the paradox of Lord Mansfield becomes a plain fact: "the "greater the truth, the greater the libel." This writer does not charge me with a direct attack upon Mr. Pitt: "you attack him "indirectly," says he, "through his mea-"sure." And this is "defamation," because it tends to "weaken his power," and, consequently to drive him from his place! Did I ever expect to hear, not the people of England, not any class of politicians or persons in England; did I ever expect, could I ever have expected, to hear one single man in England seriously hold language like this? Every thing bearing any affinity to freedom of discussion or of opinion, falls prostrate before a doctrine like this; and, could it prevail, I know of no description of beings that walk upon two legs, who ought to envy us our lot, which would be beyond all comparison worse than that of those Frenchmen, whom, in this respect, we affect to despise; because they are not amused with the name of liberty of the press. There is no possible extent to which this doctrine would not reach. On the subject of the Volunteer System, for instance, I think myself a much better judge than Mr. Pitt. I know more of the training of soldiers; more of their tempers and manners; more of their feelings and motives in all their various situations; more of the organization, the economy and discipline of a battalion; not only more of all this than Mr. Pitt now knows, but more than he ever can know as long as he lives, if he lives for forty years longer, and continues with his corps all the time. Yet, because he has chosen to clothe himself in scarlet, to gird his waist with a sash, to hang a sword upon his thigh, to put a cockade in his hat, and call himself a colonel, I am to hold my tongue, or, at least, am to wag it only in approbation of his military schemes, though exactly contrary to the evidence of my senses, lest, by speaking my mind, I should "weaken his power," and thereby possibly hasten the loss of his place. If, during the administration of Mr. Pitt, I show that the nation has declined; that the liberties of the people have been greatly abridged; that the poor rates have been more than doubled; that confidence has been destroyed between landlord and tenant; that the only effectual check upon the Bank has been removed; that the country has been inundated with paper, while gold and silver have disappeared; that paper notes down to the amount of a few shillings in England, and so low as sixpence in Ireland, are in circulation; that the country has been degraded in the eyes of the world; that she has abandoned her allies; that she has abandoned even her own honours won by our fathers; that her enemy has been exalted above her; and that she is now trembling on the verge of destruction: if I say this, I am, according to this new doctrine, guilty of a heinous offence, but, if I *prove* it, there are not in the world means sufficient to inflict on me torments adequate to my deserts.——And, as to the time, too; does this gentleman think, that the most effectual way of rouzing the people to exertions and sacrifices in defence of the constitution, is, to render it not worth defending? Those who thought with me, that rigorous measures and laws were necessary to preserve the country from the contagion of French anarchy, ought, one would imagine, now to think with me, that such measures and laws are no longer necessary; but, on the contrary, that we should be upon our guard against French despotism; for, I see no reason that the latter should not be catching as well as the

former. A ministerial writer of yesterday does, indeed, seem to apprehend some danger from the successful example of Napoleon. "Could we hope," says he, "that "the example would operate to still the "workings of sedition, to stop the pro-"gress of innovation and visionary theory "amongst nations, there would be some "consolation for that mass of horror "which the contemplation of this odious "revolution presents. But, we can scarcely "flatter ourselves with the hope of so happy "an event. Bad men, on the contrary, "will be emboldened by the success of "Buonaparté; and they will, we fear, find "a sufficient number amongst the ignorant "to become their tools." According to this notion, there is no hope left. We are doomed to everlasting apprehensions. We never can think of returning to the state in which we were previous to the French revolution. Notwithstanding that the malignant mischief has now spent its force; though liberty and equality, democracy and atheism, have been fairly and fully tried; though they have been cast aside as the greatest of national curses; though the Chief of France is again become a monarch; though the legislative body, in the name of the French people, have declared and solemnly proclaimed to the world, that "hereditary "monarchy is the only system of govern-"ment under which a nation can be happy "and great:" notwithstanding all this, the ministerial writer sees cause for alarm! He has now found out, that there are "bad "men," who may be on the side of monarchy; who may be "emboldened by "the success of Buonaparté," and who will "always find a sufficient number amongst "the ignorant to become their partisans." If we can have any hope left after this it is not, I think, reasonable to build it upon the effect of rigorous measures of any sort, especially rigorous measures with regard to the press; for the effect of such measures must be to favour the views of those "bad "men," if any such should arise. We have heard enough of the tyranny exercised over the press in France: it is one of the things that would make men dread subjugation: would it be wise, then, to act upon the principle of my correspondent? for, it would be very easy to show, that the name of liberty of the press, without the full power of censuring the public conduct of public men, would be a mere mockery; that it would be a means of sheltering instead of exposing the follies and crimes of a minister; and, that the people, placing much reliance upon its watchfulness and protection, would, in reality, be enslaved by the "palladium of free-men!" There can be no doubt that such a state of things would be much more vexatious as well as more disgraceful to the people, than the state of things now existing in France, or any where else where nothing can be published without the express permission of the government; because, in this latter case there is no mockery; no pretension to liberty of the press; the ruler or rulers frankly say, that they cannot, or will not, allow of such liberty; and, of course, the people are not deceived; they do not look to the press for information as to the conduct of their ministers, and are not thereby deceived; they judge for themselves, and they are, for the want of a free press, led to seek for information and for redress through other means; and, if they derive no advantage from the press neither do their rulers, whose follies or crimes are not at all sheltered by it, because, it being known not to be free, nobody places any reliance on what it says. This is fair on both sides; but, to pretend that the nation enjoys the liberty of the press, and, at the same time to punish men, as my correspondent appears to wish, for exposing the weakness or wickedness of ministers, would be a most cruel mockery. And, whatever he may think of it, the effect certainly would not be to discourage the hopes of those "bad men," who might be emboldened by the success of Napoleon; for, if his doctrine were acted upon, if men were dragged to jail for exposing the weakness or wickedness of public measures, and, of course, the weakness or wickedness of public men, would they not begin to ask, how any change could possibly make their situation worse? Let him recollect, too, that, by such means, men might be led to desire a change, that would, as to the mere quantum of suffering or privation, render their situation *even worse* than previous to the change; for, it must not be forgotten, that, upon such occasions, resentment is but too often a very powerful motive; and, when we reflect on the number of instances, in which every one of us has, at some time or other, gratified his resentment to the clearly-foreseen injury of his interest, we shall cease to be surprised at the readiness, with which the people of Europe have submitted to the arms of the French; and, we shall be very cautious how we listen to doctrine like that of my correspondent, which, if brought into practice, could not fail to excite resentment inextinguishable in the breast of every man whose attachment is valuable to the state.——As this corre-pon-

dent is so sturdy a partisan of Mr. Canning, I may, upon a future occasion, give a few specimens of the manner, in which that gentleman conducted a political publication; a publication which the Editor may now wish to be *forgotten*, perhaps, and, to say the truth, that wish is not far from being accomplished. It may be thought cruel to revive, for a moment, the work here alluded to; but, let Mr. Canning's friends, then, be more tolerant; let them forbear to accuse every opponent of Mr. Pitt of "scurrillity and defamation."—— Here would have followed some remarks upon what my correspondent has said relative to the Corn-bill, and the Test-laws; but they must be postponed till my next.

PRINCESS CHARLOTTE OF WALES.—This is a subject, upon which it would have been perfectly proper for all the public prints to have observed strict silence. Such a line of conduct would have shewn real respect of His Majesty and the royal family; but it has been broken through. The ministerial prints have, as usual, begun to exert their efforts to prepossess the public mind, as to the point in dispute, and even to give a party turn to the motives whence the opposition to the minister's wishes proceed. This has been done particularly in the SUN newspaper of the 21st instant. It, therefore, becomes me to endeavour to lay before my readers a true statement of the case; first premising, that I regard, as the constitution teaches me, the minister, and not the King, as the person to whom the proposed measure is to be ascribed.—The Courier (a paper now as furiously ministerial as it was formerly Robespierrean) has published a narrative of the dispute, and I believe it to be tolerably correct. From this narrative, it appears, that the measure proposed, is, to place the Princess Charlotte of Wales under the care of the King, leaving it to his Majesty to appoint persons to attend to her education; that, to this measure the Prince objects; that the Princess Charlotte of Wales is at Carleton House; and that Lord Moira has been sent for from Scotland (he has now arrived) by Mr. Pitt, in order to assist in settling the dispute.—Here the subject ought to have rested, till something had been settled; but, the ministerial papers, as if forewarned as to the result, have with more art than one would be inclined to ascribe to their editors, thrown out such hints and insinuations as appear to have no other object than that of drawing the people into an error, and of committing them unawares on the side of the minister.——The subject, whenever it shall come to be discussed (if, unhappily it must be discussed at all), will divide itself into two distinct questions, one of *law*, the other of *expediency*. The question of law has been thus anticipated by the ministerial newspapers, particularly the Morning Post of the 20th instant. "In consequence of "the reports which have for some days pre- "vailed, respecting supposed differences in "a high and illustrious family, upon the "subject of the education and care of a "minor branch of it, we deem it not im- "proper to state, that in 1718, upon a "question referred to all the Judges by "King George the First, it was resolved, "by the opinion of ten against the other "two. that the education and care of all "the King's grand-children, while minors, "did belong of right to his Majesty, as King "of the realm, during their father's life." This statement, though true in itself, must, according to the rules of sound morality, be considered as a criminal falsehood, because it keeps out of sight *a part of the truth*. The question here spoken of, in the reign of George I. was referred to the twelve judges *in their chamber*. There was no discussion in public; no decision of either House of Parliament; nothing in the way of trial even before the judges themselves, but the question merely put to them, in private, by the King, they being fully apprized before-hand of the King's wishes upon the subject. And, observe, that we are told, the question was decided by the judges, *ten* against *two*. So it was; but, the two accompanied their decision with the most cogent arguments in favour of the Prince's claim; whereas the ten gave no reasons at all.——The decision of the twelve judges, supposing them to have been unanimous, was not *law*. The question still remained for legal discussion. The decision afforded authority; but it was authority unsupported by argument, against authority supported by argument. In this state the question has descended to us; and, for the present, I shall content myself with saying, that, as to precedents, they are clearly in favour of the Prince; that, as far as I am able to judge, the law is, as to every point, decidedly with him; and, I will just add, that, with regard to the question of *expediency*, I do hope that the partisans of the minister, if they have not too much decency, will, at least, have too much prudence to force it forward for discussion.

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